

# **COLLEGE FIGHT SONGS**

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## **An Annotated Anthology**

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**William E. Studwell  
Bruce R. Schueneman**



# College Fight Songs: An Annotated Anthology

compiled by

William E. Studwell  
and Bruce R. Schueneman

Song texts assembled and revised by Bruce R. Schueneman

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# Preface

College fight songs, also known as college marches, football songs, sports songs, and pep songs, are heard throughout the United States during autumn college football games and on various other occasions. They are a significant element of American popular culture and most of us are familiar with at least some of the lively melodies used in the compositions. Yet little has been published about college fight songs.

This annotated collection is an effort to remedy the lack of published material about fight songs. From the hundreds of songs potentially available, well over one hundred were selected for possible inclusion. With some exceptions, all of the pieces included in this anthology are associated with well-known and/or sizable institutions which have well-established football programs. The exceptions are superior quality songs associated with smaller or lesser known colleges, songs associated with schools selected to achieve a degree of balance in institutional type and geographical distribution, or songs which for various other reasons came to our attention. Even if it meant the exclusion of larger or better-known schools, an effort was made to represent all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

If a good text of a song, music and words (if applicable), was available to the compilers, and if the song was in public domain or could be published with permission, the full text of the song is included in this anthology. If the text and/or permission to publish was not available to the compilers, the song is not included in spite of an intention to do so. Historical data is given for all songs included in the Song Texts section, and also for a large number of other compositions not printed in this volume. In one way or another, well over 200 songs and 200 institutions are at least touched upon.

Before we go on to what we consider to be an exciting collection, the authors wish to thank the many institutions that gave permission to use their songs as well as provided helpful information. This anthology would not have been possible without them.

*William E. Studwell*  
*Bruce R. Schueneman*

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# *HISTORICAL NOTES*



### **MAROON AND GOLD (ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY)**

After seeing the title of Arizona State University's official fight song, "Maroon and Gold," one could easily guess the colors of this large school in Tempe. However, the relation of the school colors to the diabolical nickname "Sun Devils" is uncertain. Felix E. McKernan wrote the composition in 1964.

### **WAR EAGLE (AUBURN UNIVERSITY)**

The very good fight song of Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama, "War Eagle," was written in 1955 by lyricist Al Stillman (1906-1979) and musician Robert Allen (1927-). This famous songwriting duo also wrote a number of enduring popular songs, including "Chances Are" (1957), "Moments to Remember" (1955), "No, Not Much" (1956), "It's Not for Me to Say" (1956), and the Christmas perennial "Home for the Holidays" (1954).

### **FIGHT TEAM, FIGHT (BALL STATE UNIVERSITY)**

Although the "Cardinals" of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana have adopted a colorful bird as their sports nickname, its fight song has a generic title. "Fight Team, Fight" was created by Carl Hofer. Among other Indiana institutions, Indiana State University in Terre Haute uses "March On, Sycamores!" by G.A. Gremellspacher, Valparaiso University uses "On to Victory" by lyricists Margaret J. Marquart, Geneva G. Dye, and Edward A. Anderson and composer August Bucci, and the University of Evansville uses "Hail to Evansville" by Wesley Shepard.

### **SAINT'S FIGHT (BAYLOR UNIVERSITY)**

Baylor University in Waco, Texas uses one of the most famous American melodies, "When the Saints Go Marching In," for its "Saint's Fight."

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Most likely created in New Orleans by an anonymous African-American musician late in the nineteenth century, the tune was coupled with anonymous lyrics to produce a rousing sports song.

### ***FOR BOSTON (BOSTON COLLEGE)***

Ironically, “For Boston” does not clearly identify whether it is cheering for the city, Boston University, Boston College, or some other entity. This distinctive and vigorous tribute to the “Eagles” of Boston College was created by the 1930s by Thomas J. Hurley. The title of the fight song of Boston University, “Go, BU, Go BU,” by Randy Weeks, is similarly vague.

### ***FORWARD FALCONS (BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY)***

“Forward Falcons” not only has a nicely alliterative title, but refers to the soaring hawk-like bird representing Bowling Green State University in Ohio. The anonymous song was perhaps written in the 1920s.

### ***THE COUGAR SONG (BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY)***

The “Cougars” is the nickname of the athletic teams of Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and a very appropriate one for a school in a mountain state. They could have chosen the name the “Quarterbacks,” however, because of a tradition of top passers. “The Cougar Song” was the creation of Clyde D. Sandgren.

### ***EVER TRUE TO BROWN (BROWN UNIVERSITY)***

If you just looked at the title, “Ever True to Brown” would seem to be an Ivy League alma mater rather than the competitive sports song of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Yet the composition by Donald Jackson is definitely a fight song, and a good one.

### ***THE FIGHTING CHIPPEWA (CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY)***

Visitors to Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant may wonder where the mount is, but there is no doubt about the school’s nickname, the

“Chippewas,” after seeing the title of their fight song. “The Fighting Chippewa” was written by Howard Loomis, class of 1935, and published in 1966.

### ***FIGHT SONG (CLEMSON UNIVERSITY)***

The “Tigers” of Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina use the famous 1917 tune “Tiger Rag” for its “Fight Song.” The tune is anonymous, but the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, D. J. LaRocca, and others have been credited for it. The fight song’s lyrics are also anonymous. Another outstanding melody, Frederick Ellsworth Bigelow’s 1895 “Our Director,” and another set of anonymous lyrics, “Hail to White and Purple,” is used by Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina.

### ***FIGHT FOR THE TEAM (COLGATE UNIVERSITY)***

The official sports song of Colgate University in Hamilton, upstate New York, is “Fight for the Team.” The straight-forward-titled piece was written by Theodore W. Gibson.

### ***COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY FITE SONG (COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY)***

“Colorado State University Fite Song” is the “fite” song of that institution in Fort Collins. A person named Vinke wrote this song with the tongue-in-cheek title for the “Rams.”

### ***ROAR LION, ROAR (COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY)***

Like the MGM lion, the “Lions” of Columbia University growl in their sports song “Roar Lion, Roar.” The piece was written by notable author Corey Ford (1902-1969), film composer Roy Webb (1888-1982), and lesser-known Morris W. Watkins. Also used on the campus in Manhattan is “Marching Song” by Charles H. Pattbery.

***FAR ABOVE CAYUGA'S WATERS (CORNELL UNIVERSITY)***

Actually the alma mater of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, "Far Above Cayuga's Waters," is the best-known American college song from the nineteenth century. It also is too good to be excluded from any collection of college songs, and if played at a faster beat becomes a good fight song. The lyrics were written in 1872 by two Cornell students, Archibald C. Weeks (1850-1927) and Wilmot M. Smith (1852-1906), and were set to the tune created for the ballad "Annie Lisle," written in 1858 by American H. S. Thompson. Among the other songs at Cornell is "The Big Red Team," by Charles Tourison.

***DARTMOUTH'S IN TOWN AGAIN (DARTMOUTH COLLEGE)***

The fight song of the "Big Green," "Dartmouth's in Town Again," seems to not only state a fact but appears to suggest that the other team is going to be beaten, and badly. Robert C. Hopkins' composition has been used in the Hanover, New Hampshire school's "Football Medley" since the 1920s.

***BLUE AND WHITE FIGHTING SONG (DUKE UNIVERSITY)***

"Blue and White Fighting Song" or just plain "Blue and White," represents the colors of the athletic teams of Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. The school's nickname, the "Blue Devils," understandably excludes any reference to white. The piece was written by the 1930s by G. E. Leftwich, Jr.

***EC VICTORY (EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY)***

In recent years, East Carolina University in Greenville has started to become a football powerhouse among so-called "directional universities." Therefore, their fight song, anonymous "EC Victory," has been true to its name more often than not. Western Carolina University in Cullowhee uses "Western" by lyricists Craddock and Tyra and musician R. Trevarthen.

***HURON'S FIGHT SONG (EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY)***

Both the location and former sports nickname of the “Eagles” of Eastern Michigan University, “Ypsilanti” and the “Hurons,” reflect American Indian origins. “Huron’s Fight Song” was written by Lawrence Livingston.

***FIGHTING BULLDOGS (FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY)***

The “Bulldogs” of Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan, have a ferocious sounding sports song. Graham T. Overgard (1903- ) published “Fighting Bulldogs” in 1963. Overgard also wrote “Tartar Men” for Wayne State University.

***MIGHTY RATTLERS (FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY)***

A small school nationally noted for its innovative marching band, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee has several fight songs. The official song is the anonymous “Mighty Rattlers.” Others include the also anonymous “I’m from FAMU” and “Ole FAMU.” Another Florida institution, the University of South Florida, uses “Golden Brahman Fight Song” by Gale Sperry.

***FSU FIGHT SONG (FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY)***

Lyricist Doug Alley, like in “alley-gator,” and musician Tommy Wright wrote this official fight song of Florida State University in Tallahassee in 1950. On the other hand, FSU’s nickname is the “Seminoles,” not the “Gators,” which is the name of cross-state rival, the University of Florida.

***FORDHAM RAM (FORDHAM UNIVERSITY)***

With a tough-sounding nickname, the “Rams” of Fordham University try to ram the ball all the way down the field. Their fight song, “Fordham

Ram,” was written by J. Ignatius Coveney. Another university in the “Big Apple,” New York University, uses “Old New York University,” by R.W. Ferns, class of 1909, as a fight song.

### ***FIGHT! VARSITY! (FRESNO STATE UNIVERSITY)***

Fresno State University’s fight song, “Fight! Varsity!,” has two exclamation points in its title and two creators. Chet Enos wrote the lyrics and Cuyler H. Leonard wrote the melody for this song. Longer names for both song and university are present in Harold P. Davidson’s “Ride High You Mustangs,” written for California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

### ***GEORGETOWN FIGHT SONG (GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY)***

“Georgetown Fight Song,” the sports song of that respected Catholic institution in the District of Columbia, was written for the “Hoyas” by an unknown person. Another Catholic institution in D.C. is Catholic University of America, whose fight song is “The Flying Cardinals,” written by Paul D. H. Lehman. Another important nearby school is George Washington University, for which Eugene Sweeney wrote “Buff and Blue.”

### ***RAMBLING WRECK FROM GEORGIA TECH (GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY)***

The humorous and frolicking “Rambling Wreck from Georgia Tech” is one of the most delightful of college songs. When it was published in 1919, band leader Frank Roman was erroneously credited with its composition. The lyrics are anonymous, as is the cavorting melody, which goes back in United States history at least as far as 1873. Roman did, however, write other songs for the Atlanta school, including “Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets” (1936), a tribute to Tech’s sports nickname.

### ***FIGHT SONG (GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY)***

One of the football powerhouses among smaller universities, Grambling State University in Grambling, Louisiana is a legend in sports

circles. Its “Fight Song” was written by William Wiley and Conrad Hutchinson.

### ***THE GRIDIRON KING (HARVARD UNIVERSITY)***

One of several songs in Harvard University’s rich musical heritage, bouncy and memorable “The Gridiron King” was written by Richmond K. Fletcher, class of 1908, in 1906. It exhorts the team to “hit the line for Harvard.” Another song still popular at Harvard, a former fight song, is jazzy “Harvardiana,” created by Raymond George Williams and B. Steel, two Harvard students, around 1908.

### ***OUR DIRECTOR (HARVARD UNIVERSITY)***

Composed by Frederick Ellsworth Bigelow (1873-1929), the instrumental “Our Director” or “Our Director March” is one of several superior songs serving Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Bigelow’s melody was written in 1895, and a set of words, possibly by Lloyd Adams Noble, was copyrighted in 1912. However, the composition was not widely known until its 1926 publication outside the University. The familiar melody is also used for “Rice’s Honor,” the alma mater of Rice University, and for songs at various other colleges.

### ***REDBIRDS MARCHING SONG (ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY)***

At Illinois State University in Normal, they apparently have “Red-birds” that march instead of fly. A person named Fletcher wrote “Red-birds Marching Song.” Another downstate school, Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, uses “Eastern Loyalty” by Earl Boyd.

### ***INDIANA, OUR INDIANA (INDIANA UNIVERSITY)***

“Indiana, Our Indiana,” the fight song of the “Hoosiers” of Indiana University in Bloomington, has a famous composer as the creator of its melody. Karl L. King (1891-1971), who also wrote the well-known circus march “Barnum and Bailey’s Favorite” (1913) and other pieces, wrote the

melody in 1911 for his march "The Viking." Russell P. Harker, at the time the director of the marching band and later Lieutenant Governor of Indiana, wrote the lyrics in 1912.

### ***IOWA STATE FIGHTS (IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY)***

The official fight song of Iowa State University in Ames, "Iowa State Fights" had enough collaborators to make a football backfield. Jack Barker, class of 1930, Manly Rice, class of 1930, and Paul Gnam, class of 1932, wrote the piece for the "Cyclones" in 1930, and Rosalind K. Cook arranged it.

### ***WILDCAT VICTORY (KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY)***

Published in 1927 by Harry E. Erickson, class of 1927, "Wildcat Victory" separates the "Wildcats" of Kansas State in Manhattan from the various other university wildcats by the use of the term "Aggie Wildcat." The piece is probably played even when there is no victory.

### ***FIGHT ON FOR KSU (KENT STATE UNIVERSITY)***

One of the largest institutions of higher learning in a state which has many colleges and universities, Kent State University in Kent, Ohio is musically represented by "Fight On for KSU." Edmund J. Siennicki (1920- ), who wrote other pieces of music including "Woodland Waltz" (1964), created the fight song for the "Golden Flashes."

### ***BIG RED (LAMAR UNIVERSITY)***

Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas is not one of the best-known universities in the United States, but its fight song, "Big Red," is very good as well as expansive. It was written by Charles A. "Pete" Wiley (1925- ), a band director at Lamar, around the 1950s or 1960s.

### ***SOLID MEN TO THE FRONT (LONG BEACH STATE UNIVERSITY)***

When "the march king," John Philip Sousa (1854-1932), wrote "Solid Men to the Front" in 1918, he was apparently referring to U.S. soldiers in